



## “Statement of Faith”

*(Approved by the Elder Board on 9 July 2020)*

### **Preamble**

Beach Church, with Christians of all traditions, affirms the historic Apostles', Nicene and Chalcedon Creeds in all that they teach concerning the Triune God. As a church rooted theologically in the convictions of the Protestant Reformation, and in the tradition of the Evangelical awakenings and world missionary movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, we set forth the following confessional Statement of Faith as our own theological identity and our sincerely held religious beliefs within the broader Christian and evangelical communities:

### **1. The Biblical Narrative – The Purpose and Plan of God**

We believe that the Bible records the scope of God's eternal purpose to redeem and restore humanity and all creation. Within its pages, we learn of the historical outworking of God's plan to have a people of whom He could say "I will be their God and they will be my people." (Ephesians 1:9-10; Exodus 6:7; Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 30:22; Ezekiel 11:20; Romans 9:24-26; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 21:2-3)

The Bible begins with creation so that we may know the divine image in which we are made, the life and divine fellowship that we rejected, and the heights from which we have fallen. The Bible tells us how sin entered the world, and death then also entered the world as a result of sin. It emphasizes the gravity of sin as a revolt against the authority of God our Creator and Lord and the justice of His judgment upon it. The Bible's central message is that God loves us even while we live in our rebellious nature, and it records the way in which God continues His purpose after and in spite of humanity's fall into sin, to form for Himself a people to whom He is pleased to give Himself and the enjoyment of His abiding presence as their God. (Genesis 1-3; Romans 3:8-20, 23; Romans 5:12, 18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-3; Jeremiah 31:3)

Before time began, God's plan of salvation was formulated. It originated in His grace, His free, and unmerited mercy. He made an everlasting covenant of grace with Abraham, promising that through his descendants He would bless all the families and peoples of the world. The Old Testament is devoted to an account of His gracious dealings with Abraham's descendants, the people of Israel. Through the prophet Moses, God gave to Israel His law which spelled out what He required of His people and was meant to serve as a tutor to reveal to them their sinful condition, their need for righteousness, and point them to their need for grace. In spite of their obstinate rejection of His Word as it came to them, in the laws of Moses, and the words of the prophets, He never cast them off, but continued to assure the promise of a coming Redeemer who would save them and all the peoples of the world.

(Ephesians 1:4-5; Titus 1:2; Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15:1-19; Exodus 20:1-21; Galatians 3:19,24; Romans 7:7-8; Deuteronomy 18:15; 1 Chronicles 17:10-14; Isaiah 9:1-2,6; Isaiah 11:1-9; Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53:1-12; Isaiah 60:1-3; Daniel 9:13-14; Psalm 2:7-8)

The incarnation or coming of Jesus Christ into the world is the fulfillment of God's covenant with Israel. By His perfect, sinless life He fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law for His people. His work on earth: His teaching, His crucifixion, and His resurrection, are the great turning point at which God accomplished the salvation toward which history had been moving throughout the Old Testament. (Luke 1:68-79; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:11-18; Hebrews 7:26-28; Hebrews 10:5-7; Romans 5:19; Matthew 16:21; Luke 24:25-27, 44-46; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Peter 1:10)

The New Testament concentrates on the outworking of this salvation through Jesus Christ's death, resurrection, and the gift of the life-giving Holy Spirit. It emphasizes that salvation is possible only through the sin-bearing death of Christ and a new birth leading to a new life through the Spirit of Christ. The New Testament portrays Christ's Church as the community of the saved, "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God," who are called to a life of holiness, sacrificial service, and witness to bless the world. (Matthew 1:21; Galatians 4:4-7; Acts 2:32-33, 38; Acts 2: 41-47; Acts 4:12; John 1:29; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 2:9-12, 24; 1 Peter 3:18)

Finally, the New Testament points to the consummation of God's purpose and plan when His saved people will experience the redemption of their bodies and will enter a renewed creation, a new heaven and a new earth pervaded by righteousness alone. Then and only then, with no sin either in our nature, or in our society, will God's purpose and plan of salvation for His earthly children be complete. (1 Corinthians 15:50-57; Philippians 3:20; Romans 8:19-23; 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 3:2-3; Revelation 22:3)

We believe that this is the comprehensive plan for salvation set forth in the Bible. Conceived in a past eternity, achieved at a distinct point in time and worked out in history and human experience, it will reach its consummation in the eternity of the future when God will "bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." The Bible is unique in its claim to instruct us about "such a great salvation." (Ephesians 1:11-14; 1 Peter 1:4-5; Romans 8:30; Hebrews 2:3)

## **2. The Triune God**

We believe in one living and true God, who is eternal, infinite, and perfect in glory and beauty, and in holiness, righteousness and truth, and in goodness and love. This one God is the sovereign Creator and sustainer of all that exists. In the unity of God, there are three co-equal and co-eternal persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – each of whom is worthy of our highest reverence, adoration, and obedience. From all eternity between the three persons of the Godhead there has been a perfect mutual love, unity of purpose, and indwelling. While this tri-unity of God is clearly affirmed in Scripture, it surpasses our full understanding and inspires our awe.

(Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; Revelation 1:8; Psalm 27:5; Leviticus 19:2; Isaiah 6:1-3; Habakkuk 1:13; Psalm 11:7; Psalm 103:6; Romans 1:23-26; Psalm 107:1, 8; 1 John 4:8, 16; Revelation 4:11; Psalm 104:24-29; Acts 17:24-28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; Luke 1:35; Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1: 6-12; Revelation 4:11; Revelation 5:12-13; Galatians 5:16-18; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; John 14:10-11; John 17:21, 25; Psalm 145:3; Psalm 147:5; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Timothy 6:14-15)

### **a. The Father**

We believe in God the Father Almighty, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, who reigns with providential care over all of His creation and over the entirety of history. He is the all-loving, all-powerful, all-knowing, ever-present, and relational God who hears and answers prayer. While He is fatherly in His attitude toward all humanity, He is a true Father to all who become His children through faith in Christ. His sovereign and loving purpose in redemption is realized through the sending of His Son and His Spirit for the salvation of the world. (Matthew 6:9; Exodus 6:3; Psalm 121:4; Isaiah 45:7; Amos 3:6; Acts 17:26; Exodus 34:6-7; Job 37:16; 1 John 3:20; Psalm 66:19-20; Matthew 6:6-8; Matthew 5:45; Luke 12:32; John 1:12; John 3:16; Galatians 4:4-6; Romans 5:5)

### **b. The Lord Jesus Christ**

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the eternally begotten Son of God, co-equal with the Father. Who took on full humanity so that He is fully God and fully man. As a human being He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless human life, fulfilled the law of God in its entirety as well as numerous Old Testament prophecies about Him, offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all who would place their faith in Him by dying on a cross, and rose from the dead on the third day to demonstrate His power over sin and death. In His glorified humanity, He ascended into heaven to the right hand of the Father, where He now reigns with the Father over all things and intercedes for His people as their High Priest. From heaven He will return to judge the living and the dead and establish the new creation over which He will reign forever as its undisputed Sovereign, King of kings and Lord of lords. (Romans 10:9; John 1:1-5, 18; John 3:16; John 14:10-30; 1 John 4:9; Philippians 2:7-9; Hebrews 1:1-14; Hebrews 2:9-18; Hebrews 4:14-15; Matthew 1:20-23; Luke 1:26-38; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22-24; Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2; Matthew 16:21; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Isaiah 9:6; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; Titus 2:13-14; Genesis 3:15, 12:3; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 7:14, 9:1-2, 11:1, 53:2; Zechariah 11:12-13, 12:10; Psalm 49:15)

### **c. The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. As the Spirit of God and Christ, His pre-eminent ministry in the new covenant is to glorify the Lord Jesus, and He is present in the world to make human beings aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He has inspired the Scriptures and it is through them that He primarily addresses humanity today. He convicts human beings of sin and opens the Scriptures to their understanding. He draws them to Christ, regenerates and indwells them, and seals them as God's possession to the day of resurrection. When Christians submit themselves to the Holy Spirit, He provides them with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He continues to sanctify them as believers by cultivating His fruit, a Christ-like character and holiness within their lives, and He empowers them to serve God in His church and in the world by giving every believer at least one spiritual gift when they are saved through faith. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-9; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; John 3:5-8; Romans 8:9; 1 Peter 1:11; John 15:26; John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 3:7; Hebrews 10:15; John 14:16-17; John 16:8-15; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:9-11; Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 4:30; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 3:16-19; Ephesians 5:18; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the owner and sovereign dispenser of these spiritual gifts, and that such gifts are not innate natural talents, but rather are supernatural empowerments given to a believer to minister to the church body in ways that would not be possible by mere natural effort. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Acts 2:4; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 19:6)

Various passages in Scripture mention a variety of gifts, including prophecy, ministry, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy, speaking in languages (tongues), and interpreting languages (tongues). We believe gifts of the Spirit and miracles are still active in the church today to glorify God, and they are to be used in love to complement each other and to build up the church, not to exalt any individual or feed a desire for attention. We believe that all gifts are equally valid and valuable, each fitting together just as the parts of the human body work together to make a functional whole. (1 Corinthians 12:4-26; 29-30; 1 Corinthians 14:3; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 14:27-2)

### **3. Revelation and the Bible**

We believe that God has graciously disclosed His existence and power in the created order and has supremely revealed Himself to fallen human beings in the person of His Son, the incarnate Word. Moreover, we believe that the Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the written Word of God. The Bible consists of the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, and only these books. It is God's revelation of Himself to humanity and the sure source of knowledge about God. The Bible was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the Bible, as originally written, is true, infallible, and entirely free from error. God, in His providence, has superintended the transmission of Scripture through the ages so that the Bible we possess today is essentially faithful to the original texts written by the apostles and prophets.

We believe that the Bible, as the written Word of God, is of divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. While the Bible touches on diverse matters, its ultimate focus is the person and work of Jesus Christ in His first and second coming, and, hence, no portion of the Bible, even the Old Testament, is fully understood until it leads to Him. The Bible is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions are to be measured. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs, faith, and living. Submission to the teachings and authority of the Bible is the basis for Christian union. By hearing, believing, and obeying the Word of God, believers are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel. (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:19-20; John 1:1,18; Hebrews 1:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; John 17:17; Titus 1:2-3; Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:21-25; Psalm 119:105, 140, 160; 2 Peter 1:4; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:25-27, 44-46; John 5:39; Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 1:25-29; Psalm 12:6)

### **4. The Creation and Fall**

#### **a. The Physical World**

We believe that God created all things by His perfect will for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness. As a benevolent and perfect Creator, God providentially sustains, directs, and governs all creatures and things, from the greatest to the least, to the end for which they were created. While God created humanity and the universe in a state of goodness and perfection, death and corruption entered into

God's creation through the sin of Adam and Eve; and as a result, the whole creation is cursed and awaits the day of its redemption. We believe that God created the human race to have authority and stewardship over the earth. Consequently, humanity is responsible for protecting and tending the earth with the same love and care that God shows for all that He has made. (Genesis 1:1-31; Colossians 1:16; Romans 1:20; Genesis 1:31; Genesis 3:17-18; Romans 8:18-25; Revelation 22:3; Genesis 1:28; Genesis 2:15; Psalm 8:6-8)

### **b. Angels, Satan and Demons**

We believe that, in addition to the created, material universe, there exists a spiritual realm in which dwells an innumerable company of angels – spiritual beings who were created by God. These angels minister before God and they are sent forth as messengers to aid the righteous and to administer God's judgment upon the wicked. Certain angels, called demons, Satan being their chief, through deliberate choice revolted against God and fell from their exalted position. Satan, and his kingdom are opposed in every way to the kingdom of God, yet he is not equal to God in nature or power. Throughout history Satan and his demonic forces have engaged in a cosmic war against God, His people, and the remaining faithful angels. Satan is the originator of sin. Under the sanction of God, he led our first parents, Adam and Eve, into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power. Jesus defeated Satan at the cross; yet there awaits a future day when Christ will finally banish Satan and his minions to the lake of fire.

(Revelation 5:11-12; Hebrews 1:14; Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Daniel 10:2-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:10-13; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:7-12; Genesis 3:1-19; Colossians 2:13-15; Revelation 20:10)

### **c. Humanity**

We believe that God created each person, as either male or female, in His spiritual image, to be like Him in character; and, as a result, each person has inherent dignity and worth. People are the supreme object of God's creation. While God created men and women with equality in their dignity and personhood, He intended for them to have different roles and to complement each other in mutually enriching ways. We believe that every human life, from conception to natural death, has immeasurable value and significance and ought to be vigorously protected and ardently cherished.

We believe that God created humanity to enjoy intimate fellowship with Him. This fellowship was broken when the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were tempted by Satan and sinned against their *Creator* in an act of rebellion and disobedience. As a result of their transgression, humanity became alienated from God and all creation was cursed. Adam's sin and guilt passed to all of his descendants bringing a punishment of spiritual and physical death to all of humanity. In their present state, all people are born with a sinful nature and are spiritually dead. Although every person has a tremendous potential for good, they are tainted by sin in the whole of their being, marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God, and they are only worthy of God's condemnation and wrath. Due to their sinful nature and attitude of disobedience, humans exist in a state of enmity with God, spiritually separated from God, and they are utterly incapable of reconciling themselves to Him on their own. Those who trust in Christ are redeemed from this enmity by faith.

(Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1-2; Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:3-8; Psalm 139:13-17; Genesis 3:1-9; Revelation 12:9; Genesis 3:24; Genesis 3:14-19; Romans 8:19-23; Romans 3:10-18, 23; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:13-25; Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 1:19-32; Hebrews 9:27; Romans 5:6, 10; Romans 8:6-7; Colossians 1:21; Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 59:1-2)

## **5. Salvation**

We believe that salvation is God's free gift to us as human beings, but each person must individually accept it. No person can make up for his or her sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in and accepting Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we receive salvation. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his or her heart and life by faith.

We believe this salvation offer is made to all by the grace of God the Father, given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. The Father sent his Son to suffer voluntarily and die on the cross in our place as a substitutionary sacrifice in order to make atonement for our sins. Jesus' all-sufficient, self-sacrifice was expiatory in that it satisfied the justice of God. His death was also propitiatory in that it appeased the divine wrath that was directed against humanity. On the cross, Jesus canceled the record of our debt to God, He triumphed over Satan and death, and He secured our peace with God forever. (Matthew 7:21; Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 2:8-10, 4:30; John 3:15-16, 5:24, 10:27-29, 14:6; 2 Timothy 1:9; Galatians 4:4-7; Romans 5:1-2, 8; Romans 3:21-26; Romans 8:13-17, 32, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 9:24-28; 1 John 2:2, 5:11-13; Colossians 2:13-15; Romans 6:23; Jude 24)

The Scriptures depict our salvation in three aspects:

### **a. The Conversion Moment**

We believe conversion is our willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of our sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation. When people are drawn by the Holy Spirit to Christ and embrace Him by faith, they are brought into union with Him and receive justification from God whereby, He forgives their sins, imputes to them the righteousness of Christ, and declares them to be righteous in His sight. This act of justification reconciles us to God and brings us into His family as His adopted children. We also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who regenerates us with new life in Christ, making us spiritually alive to God. (Acts 2: 38-41, Acts 3:19; Acts 16:31; 2 Corinthians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 2:15-16, Galatians 3:6, 11; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:10-11; Ephesians 1:5, 13-14, Ephesians 2:4; Romans 6:11; John 1:12-13; John 3:3, 16; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26)

### **b. The Sanctification Process**

We believe that God's saving work, which began at conversion, continues throughout life as believers yield themselves to the indwelling Holy Spirit, resulting in a gradual growth in holiness, increasing love and devotion to God, progress toward moral and spiritual maturity, and conformity to the image of Christ and the beauty of His character. By this process believers grow together into a holy temple in the Lord, sanctified (set-apart) from unbelievers. (1 Corinthians 6:11, 14-20, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Philippians 1:6, Philippians 2:3-8, 12-13; Romans 6:11-19, Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 4:11-13; Ephesians 5:8-10, 17-20; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:21-22; Mark 8:34-38; John 8:31-32, John 13:34-35, John 15:5-8; 1 John 3:10; Matthew 28:18-20)

### **c. The Glorious Destiny**

We believe that Jesus, as an everlasting high priest, is seated at the right hand of the Father continually making intercession to the Father on behalf of those who believe, that they may be assured of being kept secure by

God's power for the glorious salvation that will be manifested with the return of Christ. Those whom the Father has given and drawn to Jesus will be divinely preserved and finally perfected in the image of the Lord at the time of their bodily resurrection. (Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 7:24-25; 1 Peter 1:3-5; John 6:37-39, 44; Acts 13:48; 1 Corinthians 1:9; John 10:28-29, John 17:6-9; Romans 8:29-30; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2-3)

## **6. The Church**

### **a. The Universal Church**

We believe that the totality of believers, without difference of race, gender, ethnicity, nationality or social class, from all times, in heaven and on earth, form one, holy, universal and apostolic church. This Church is an invisible, living, spiritual body of all people who are in union with Jesus Christ, who is the great and only head of the Church. (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 3:14-21; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 12:22-23; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Revelation 7:9-10, 13-17)

### **b. The Local Church**

We believe that a local church is a community of born again believers who have been baptized on the basis of their own personal confession of faith in Jesus Christ and who commit to unite together in a given location for the purposes of worshipping God, proclaiming and extending the gospel to the ends of the earth, and building each other up in their faith through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, the practice of the ordinances, the offering of prayer, the use of their gifts, and the exercise of discipline. In association with other churches of like faith the local church functions independently from any outside church hierarchy, but under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the great head of the Church, and the oversight of biblically-qualified elders who are called to lead the church by shepherding, governing, teaching and preaching the Scriptures, and equipping the members of the church to serve. Elders are assisted in their ministry by deacons who are appointed to give supportive leadership to other church ministries. (Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 2-3; Acts 20:17; 1 Timothy 4:13; Ephesians 5:21; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 1 Corinthians 14:12; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; Acts 11:22-26; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 14:21-28; Acts 20:17,28; Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1: 5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 6:1-6; Romans 16:1-2; Philippians 1:1)

### **c. Partners within (or Members of) the Church**

We believe that all partners within (or members of) our church form a spiritual priesthood and are equal in rights and responsibilities regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality or social class. As part of this spiritual priesthood, members are to serve the household of faith, and this involves a commitment to private and corporate prayer, a stewardship of time, spiritual gifts and financial resources to support the work of the gospel. (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10; Galatians 3:28; John 13:14-17; Galatians 5:13; Acts 2:42; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:7-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Philippians 4:14-19)

We believe that those people who request designation as partners and are approved as such, must agree with the church's mission and acknowledge its core beliefs as expressed in this Statement of Faith. Partners must also covenant to protect the unity of the church by acting in Christian love toward other partners, by refusing to gossip, and by following the biblical model of church leadership. (Romans 15:5; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17; Colossians 1; Titus 1; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5)

Additionally, partners specifically share a responsibility to pray for the growth of the church and spreading the gospel, inviting the unchurched to attend church services, and warmly welcoming those who do attend. (1 Thessalonians 1:2; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:7)

We believe that partners also covenant to support the testimony and work of the church by participating faithfully, growing in Christ, and giving regularly. (Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 16:2) If serving as an employee or volunteer within the church or its ministries, partners will commit themselves to adhering to the church's standards of morals and conduct, as well as the church's employment and volunteer policies, as applicable.

#### **d. Ordinances of the Church (Baptism and Communion)**

We believe that there are only two ordinances of the church, which are normally observed in the new covenant in the following order:

Baptism, which is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is an act of obedience by which believers publicly signify that they have faith in the crucified and risen Christ. Through baptism, believers are putting away or burying the old life and are determined to walk in the new life that is in Christ.

Communion, or The Lord's Supper, which consists of bread and wine (or grape juice as a practical substitute), is a means by which believers thankfully remember the death of Christ for their sins, rededicate their lives to Him, receive spiritual nourishment, declare their unity, and proclaim Christ's second coming. The wine or grape juice signifies the blood of Christ while the bread signifies the body of Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 41; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 1 Corinthians 11:17-32)

#### **e. The Discipline of the Church.**

We believe that the local church has the responsibility to exercise loving and redemptive discipline of her congregation who have strayed from the teaching of the Scriptures through their attitude, beliefs, or through the actions of their lives. If loving admonishment to restore an offending member to spiritual health has failed, discipline may involve the loss of partnership/membership rights and exclusion from the congregation of the church until the disciplined person will be joyfully received back into the church on the basis of confession and repentance of sin. (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; Titus 3:10-11; 3 John 8-10)

#### **f. The Worship of the Church**

We believe that Christians can and should worship God at all times and in all aspects of their lives. Generally, this church will observe the first day of the week as the Lord's Day and consider it as the divinely appointed day for corporate worship, instruction, and community, within our available space and resources. We also believe that Scripture is to be studied by each believer, but it is best understood within the collective wisdom of the Christian community both past and present. We believe that our corporate worship is always a part of the larger worship of the church universal and therefore we affirm the importance of cooperation with like-minded Christians in other churches. (Psalm 95:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 12:1-8; Acts 20:7; 1

Corinthians 16:1-2; John 4:23-24; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Timothy 4:2; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 4:11-13)

### **g. The Mission of the Church**

We believe that it is the duty and privilege of every follower of the Lord Jesus Christ in the new covenant and of every local church of Christ to be involved in the Great Commission by making Christian disciples of the nations, both locally and globally. This is done through Spirit-empowered verbal witness and preaching, prayer and financial support, and is undergirded by a lifestyle of holiness, good deeds motivated by loving one's neighbor as yourself, and the pursuit of justice. (Matthew 4:19; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 8:1,4; Acts 11:19-24; Acts 13:1-4; Colossians 4:2-6; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; Philippians 2:14-16; Matthew 5:13-16)

### **h. The Cooperation of Churches**

We believe that, just as it is essential for every believer to be joined to a local church, so it is vital for every local church to fellowship with other churches of like precious faith. Such a fellowship is vital for it enables local churches to work together in evangelism at home and abroad, in mentoring and teaching future church leaders, and in providing counsel and help to one another. By such a fellowship, there is visibly seen the unity of these local churches as one body with a common faith under Christ their only Lord and head. (Acts 15:1-35; Romans 16:1-2, 16; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:16; Ephesians 4:4; Ephesians 1:22-23)

## **7. Marriage, Singleness, and Human Sexuality**

### **a. Marriage and Singleness**

We believe that marriage is the permanent, exclusive, heterosexual, and conjugal "one flesh" union and covenant between one man and one woman, ordained and sealed by God, preceded by a public leaving of parents, consummated in sexual union, issuing in a permanent, mutually supportive partnership, in furtherance of the moral, spiritual, and public good of binding father, mother, and child. It is God's unique gift to provide the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression, and the means for procreation of the human race.

We believe that the husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to give herself graciously to the Christ-like servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Christian marriage, like the Church, transcends ethnic and racial boundaries. Christians should marry according to the standards laid out in Scripture and only to those who are believers. While married life is a blessed life, we recognize that, for some believers, the call to singleness is God's blessed will for their lives so that they may serve God wholeheartedly. Celibacy and faithful singleness are also to be celebrated and affirmed within Beach Church. (Genesis 2:18-24; Malachi 2:15-16; Matthew 19:4-12; Psalms 127; 1 Corinthians 7:1-8, 32-34, 39;

Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Ruth 1:1-17, Ruth 4:9-13; Leviticus 18; Nehemiah 11:25-27; Mark 6:18; Mark 10:5-9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15; Col 3:18-19; Hebrews 13:4; Romans 12:10; 1 Timothy 5:1-2)

### **b. Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe that God has made it clear in Scripture that He hates divorce; however, because of the hardness of the heart of man, He permits divorce under two (2) circumstances: adultery and abandonment by an unbelieving spouse. Under either of these 2 conditions, we believe that the non-adulterous spouse and the abandoned believer are both free to remarry. We further believe that there are real world circumstances that may necessitate that a husband and wife be separated, e.g. abuse, addictions, etc. with the hope that God will provide a path for restoration. (Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:7-9; 1 Cor 7:10-17)

### **c. Sexual Immorality**

We believe that sexual acts outside marriage are prohibited as sinful. Consequently, our partners/members should resist and refrain from any and all sexual acts outside marriage — including but not limited to adultery, fornication, incest, zoophilia, pornography, prostitution, voyeurism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, sodomy, polygamy, polyamory, sologamy, rejection of one's biologic sex, cohabitation or same-sex sexual acts. (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:7-23; Leviticus 20:10-21; Deuteronomy 5:18; Matthew 5:27-28, 15:19; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-13, 9:24-27; 2 Peter 1:6; James 3:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19, 22-23; Ephesians 4:17-19; Colossians 3:5; Hebrews 4:15; Psalm 139:23-24; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

### **d. Gender Identity**

We believe that God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal personal dignity. Consequently, Beach Church partners/members and congregants must affirm their biological sex and refrain from any and all attempts to physically change, alter, or disagree with their predominant biological sex — including but not limited to elective sex-reassignment, transvestite, transgender, or non-binary “genderqueer” acts or conduct. Individuals should use only those building facilities intended for their respective gender if such facilities are so marked by signage or other means. (Genesis 1:26-28, Romans 1:26-32, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

### **e. Sexual Orientation**

We believe that God created and ordered human sexuality to the permanent, exclusive, comprehensive, and conjugal “one flesh” union of man and woman, our partners/members and congregants must affirm the sexual complementarity of man and woman and resist any and all same-sex sexual attractions and refrain from any and all same-sex sexual acts or conduct, which are intrinsically disordered. (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 10:5-9, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 5:25-27, Revelation 19:7-9, Revelation 21:2)

### **f. Redemption**

We believe that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and should seek redemption through confession, repentance, baptism, and faith in Jesus Christ. Consequently, our partners/members and congregants must welcome and treat with respect, compassion, and sensitivity all who experience various forms of habitual

sin, but who are taking actions to conform their behavior to the Beach Church Statement of Faith. (Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:1-10, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:14-16)

## **8. Human Life**

We believe that God has created mankind in His image (Imago Dei) and that human life begins at fertilization. God, in His infinite sovereignty, uniquely formed human beings and gave them a special dignity, personal freedom, and individual accountability among all the works of creation. Human beings have been made for relationship with God and to be good and faithful stewards of creation. God created each person's inmost being, knitting each person together in his mother's womb. As God's individualized and personal creation, each person is fearfully and wonderfully made, and God has ordained all the days of each person's life before he came to be. (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16)

### **a. The Beginning of Life**

Based on Holy Scripture and the constant moral teaching of the universal Church, we believe that from the moment of fertilization until natural death, every human life is sacred because every human life has been created by God, in His image and likeness. From the moment of fertilization, every human life must be recognized, respected, and protected as having the rights of a person and the inviolable right to life. The right to life and physical integrity of every unborn human life is inviolable—it is not a concession to be made by society or the state, but it is instead inherent to the unborn human life by virtue of its creation in the image of God. Because human life begins at the moment of fertilization, it is against our religious and moral conviction to formally or materially cooperate in the termination of unborn human life. (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:1-2, Isaiah 49:5; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Luke 1:39-45; Exodus 20:13)

### **b. The Defense of Life**

The Church and all her ministers and ministries should publicly witness to society and to the state regarding the intrinsic, inherent, and inviolable dignity of all human life, from fertilization to natural death. Therefore, we are strongly committed to the preservation and defense of unborn human life, which compels our religious, moral, and ethical duty to defend unborn human life from destruction, whether by surgical abortion or use of drugs, devices, or services that have the intent, design, effect, or risk of terminating unborn human life or of preventing the implantation of a fertilized egg or embryo and/or its growth post-fertilization. Birth control measures which prevent pregnancy by keeping the ovaries from releasing eggs, or which cause changes in the cervical mucus to make it difficult for the sperm to find an egg, are not considered as terminating life. (*Genesis 9:5-6*; Exodus 20:13, 21:22; Psalm 22:9-10, Psalm 139:13-16; *Proverbs 6:16-19*; *Ecclesiastes 11:5*; *Isaiah 49:1*)

### **c. Holy Scriptures**

In standing against abortion, this church incorporates by reference the following Holy Scriptures, which are cited in the statements, resolutions, commentaries, or doctrines of Christian denominations that are expressly and vocally opposed to abortion. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 25:21-22; Exodus 20:13; Psalm 22:9-10; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:1-2; Isaiah 49:5; Job 10:8-12; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Luke 1:39-45)

## **9. Civil Government and Religious Freedom**

We believe that both the State and Church are divinely ordained institutions with distinctive concerns and responsibilities. Christians are to honor, pray for and submit to their political leaders so that they rule wisely and

justly. Christians are called to obey the law, although civil disobedience is a legitimate response to demands that oppose the will of our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture, for He is the only Lord of the conscience and over all the kings of the earth. The responsibility of the State is to guarantee the religious liberty of all persons of any religion. The Church neither expects nor requires the State to enforce religious orthodoxy. (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Daniel 3:17-18; Acts 4:19-20)

### **10. Eternity and the Restoration of All Things**

We believe that people were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. Those who are eternally separated from God will exist in the lake of fire. Those who are eternally in union with Him will exist in heaven. Heaven and the lake of fire are real places of eternal existence.

We believe that at the end of this age, at a time only known to God the Father, Jesus will return personally and visibly to the earth with His angels; He will exercise His role as judge and His kingdom will be consummated. At the completion of His 1000-year reign on the earth, the present fallen creation will pass away, and God will create a new heaven and a new earth – the home of righteousness. There will be a personal, bodily resurrection of all people, the righteous and the wicked. They will be judged according to their deeds. Those who have not been saved by faith in Christ will be consigned to eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire with the devil and his angels, while the righteous will be rewarded with a blessed everlasting life together in the presence of the Triune God. God will be all in all and His people will be enthralled by the immediacy of His ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of His glorious grace. This is our hope, and thus we say, "Come Lord Jesus!" (Mark 13:32; Matthew 24:30-31; Titus 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15; John 5:28-29; Philippians 3:20-21; Revelation 21:22; Revelation 22:5, 20)

(The Beach Church Statement of Faith is not the exhaustive extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe.)